United Nations E/2006/57

Economic and Social Council

Distr.: General
25 April 2006

Original: English

Substantive session of 2006
Geneva, 3-28 July 2006
Item 13 (k) of the provisional agenda*
Economic and environmental questions: cartography

Report of the United Nations Group of Experts on Geographical Names on the work of its twenty-third session

(Vienna, 28 March-4 April 2006)

Summary

The twenty-third session of the United Nations Group of Experts on Geographical Names, convened in accordance with Economic and Social Council decision 2004/303 of 23 July 2004, was held at United Nations Office at Vienna from 28 March to 4 April 2006.

The present report describes the activities carried at by the session, and presents the major findings of the Group of Experts with a primary focus on the importance of its work in supporting the United Nations Conferences on the Standardization of Geographical Names and the essential contribution it continues to provide to Member States in the geographical information field, particularly in the context of natural-disaster preparedness and responding to humanitarian needs.

* E/2006/100.

06-32772 (E) 180506

Contents

		Paragraphs	Page
I.	Terms of reference	1	4
II.	Attendance	2	4
III.	Officers of the session	3	4
IV.	Opening of the session	4–5	6
V.	Adoption of the agenda	6	6
VI.	Report of the Chairperson	7	7
VII.	Report of the secretariat of the Group of Experts	8	7
VIII.	Reports of the divisions	9–29	7
	A. Africa South Division	10	7
	B. United States of America-Canada Division	11	8
	C. French-speaking Division	12	8
	D. United Kingdom Division	13	8
	E. Baltic Division	14	8
	F. Norden Division	15	8
	G. China Division	16	9
	H. Dutch- and German-speaking Division	17	9
	I. Eastern Europe, Northern and Central Asia Division	18	9
	J. East Central and South-East Europe Division	19	9
	K. Asia South-East and Pacific South-West Division	20	9
	L. Asia East Division (other than China)	21	9
	M. Africa East Division	22–23	10
	N. Asia South-West Division (other than Arabic)	24–25	10
	O. Latin America Division	26	10
	P. Arabic Division	27	10
	Q. Romano-Hellenic Division	28	11
	R. Other papers	29	11
IX.	Reports of the liaison officers, regional meetings and international organizations	30–38	11
X.	Activities relating to the Working Group on Training Courses in Toponymy	39–50	13
XI.	Activities relating to the Working Group on Toponymic Data Files and Gazetteers	51–74	14
XII.	Activities relating to the Working Group on Toponymic Terminology	75–78	17
XIII.	Activities relating to the Working Group on Romanization Systems	79–84	18
XIV.	Activities relating to the Working Group on Country Names	85–91	18

XV.	Activities relating to the Working Group on Publicity and Funding	92–100	19
XVI.	Activities relating to the Working Group on Evaluation and Implementation	101–102	20
XVII.	Activities relating to the Working Group on Exonyms	103–108	21
XVIII.	Activities relating to the Working Group on Pronunciation	109–111	22
XIX.	Activities relating to the Working Group on the Promotion of Indigenous and Minority Group Names	112–119	22
XX.	Toponymic guidelines for map editors and other editors	120–126	23
XXI.	Other toponymic issues	127–138	24
XXII.	Implementation of resolutions and the aims and functions of the Group of Experts	139–144	25
XXIII.	Preparation for the Ninth United Nations Conference on the Standardization of Geographical Names	145–146	26
XXIV.	Provisional agenda for the twenty-fourth session of the United Nations Group of Experts on Geographical Names	147	27
XXV.	Adoption of the report	148	27
XXVI.	Expression of thanks	149	27
Annex			
	Provisional agenda for the twenty-fourth session of the United Nations Group of Experts on Geographical Names		28

I. Terms of reference

1. In pursuance of Economic and Social Council decision 2004/303 of 23 July 2004, the Secretary-General invited the United Nations Group of Experts on Geographical Names (UNGEGN) to convene its twenty-third session in Vienna from 28 March to 4 April 2006.

II. Attendance

2. The session was attended by 250 participants from 67 countries, representing 21 of the 22 geographic/linguistic divisions of the Group of Experts. Twenty-five observers were present. The provisional agenda for the twenty-fourth session of the Group of Experts is contained in the annex to the present document. The list of documents and the list of participants are issued in a separate document (GEGN/23/INF/1).

III. Officers of the session

3. The officers of the twenty-third session were:

Chairperson:
Helen Kerfoot

Vice-Chairpersons:
Brahim Atoui
Jörn Sievers

Rapporteurs:
Brian Goodchild
Dónall Mac Giolla Easpaig

For the names of the Chairpersons of the divisions, see UNGEGN website (http://unstats.un.org/unsd/geoinfo/ungegndivisions.htm). The officers of the working groups were:

Working Group on Training Courses in Toponymy

Convenor:
Ferjan Ormeling

Rapporteur:
Isolde Hausner

Working Group on Toponymic Data Files and Gazetteers

Convenor:
Randall Flynn

Rapporteur:
Trent Palmer

Working Group on Toponymic Terminology

Convenor:
Naftali Kadmon

Rapporteur:
Ferjan Ormeling

Working Group on Romanization Systems

Convenor:
Peeter Päll

Rapporteur:
Caroline Burgess

Working Group on Country Names

Convenor:
Leo Dillon

Rapporteur:
Randall Flynn

Working Group on Publicity and Funding

Convenor:
David Munro

Rapporteur:
Dónall Mac Giolla Easpaig

Working Group on Evaluation and Implementation

Convenor:
Ki-Suk Lee

Rapporteur:
Botolv Helleland

Working Group on Exonyms

Convenor:
Peter Jordan

Rapporteur:
David Blair

Working Group on Pronunciation

Convenor:
Dónall Mac Giolla Easpaig

Rapporteur:
Isolde Hausner

Working Group on the Promotion of Indigenous and Minority Group Names

Convenor:
William Watt

Rapporteur:
Brian Goodchild

IV. Opening of the session

4. The twenty-third session of the Group of Experts was opened on 28 March 2006. The Chairperson, Helen Kerfoot (Canada), opened the session and welcomed the experts.

5. The Director of the United Nations Statistics Division made an introductory statement. He spoke of standardization issues and trends, particularly the relevance of geographical names to the Geographic Information System (GIS), mapping and statistical data collection, and referred to the key role of geographical names in spatial data infrastructure. He also drew attention to the Statistics Division's support for geographical names through publications and training courses.

V. Adoption of the agenda

6. The provisional agenda (GEGN/23/1) was adopted without change as follows:

1. Opening of the session.
2. Adoption of the agenda.
3. Report of the Chairperson.
4. Report of the secretariat of the Group of Experts.
5. Reports of the divisions.
6. Reports of the liaison officers, regional meetings and international organizations.
7. Activities relating to the Working Group on Training Courses in Toponymy.
8. Activities relating to the Working Group on Toponymic Data Files and Gazetteers.
9. Activities relating to the Working Group on Toponymic Terminology.
10. Activities relating to the Working Group on Romanization Systems.
11. Activities relating to the Working Group on Country Names.
12. Activities relating to the Working Group on Publicity and Funding.
13. Activities relating to the Working Group on Evaluation and Implementation.
14. Activities relating to the Working Group on Exonyms.
15. Activities relating to the Working Group on Pronunciation.
16. Activities relating to the Working Group on the Promotion of Indigenous and Minority Group Names.
17. Toponymic guidelines for map editors and other editors.
18. Other toponymic issues.
19. Implementation of resolutions and aims and functions of the Group of Experts.

20. Preparation for the Ninth United Nations Conference on the Standardization of Geographical Names.

21. Provisional agenda for the twenty-fourth session of the Group of Experts.

22. Adoption of the report.

VI. Report of the Chairperson

7. The Chairperson presented her report (GEGN/23/10), recalling the first meeting of the Group of Experts in 1960, and drew attention to the significant changes in communication media that had taken place since then. She spoke of the importance of geographical names as an essential element of cultural identity and especially the importance of standardized names in geo-referenced information systems, in order to provide reliable data for persons addressing, for instance, humanitarian and environmental issues. She then referred to the work undertaken since the last session of the Group of Experts, in particular the activities of working groups and divisions, and the cooperation with the UNGEGN secretariat. The Chairperson provided summaries of the current information that UNGEGN had available on contacts for geographical names authorities in Member States (WP.2 and WP.3) and requested additions and corrections.

VII. Report of the secretariat of the Group of Experts

8. The secretariat of the Group of Experts provided a summary of the major activities it had carried out during the period 2004-2005 (GEGN/23/11). The English version of a basic manual on national standardization of geographical names had been published; translations of the manual, as well as a technical reference manual, would be published shortly. The UNGEGN website had been maintained and support given to four toponymic training courses. The secretariat had initiated the design of a database on country and major city names. Other comments referred to participation in the activities of working groups and the need for integrating geographical names data into national and regional spatial data infrastructures.

VIII. Reports of the divisions

9. The Chairperson commented on discussions at the twenty-second session of UNGEGN with respect to country and divisional reports. There was no agenda item at UNGEGN sessions for individual country reports, and these should be presented under the banner of the respective divisions.

A. Africa South Division

10. The Division presented working paper No. 15, which referred to the countries in the Division and provided an outline of toponymic activities in four of them, Botswana, Madagascar, Mozambique and South Africa. Of note was the work in defining localities in Mozambique and the production of a 10-minute promotional video on South Africa.

B. United States of America-Canada Division

11. The report of the Division, working paper No. 20, summarized the collaborative work of the names boards, particularly the meetings held and the work undertaken on policies and procedures in geographical naming. A draft version of the new "Principles, Policies and Procedures" of the United States Board on Geographic Names was on the Internet, but was not yet finally approved. Attention was drawn to the redesign of the databases of the United States and Canada. The Chairperson also commented on cooperation with Mexico in the production of small-scale maps of North America using official toponyms.

C. French-speaking Division

12. The Division's working paper No. 21 reported on the database of exonyms, website maintenance, finance for divisional activities from the International Agency of la Francophonie, a training course on toponymy and a Web-based bulletin. The report acknowledged the significant work done by Daniel Hazard for the Division.

D. United Kingdom Division

13. Working paper No. 25, presented by the Division, provided information on the Ordnance Survey (the national mapping agency of Great Britain), including the development of an electronic version of its place names gazetteer. The paper also reported on the Ordnance Survey's activity in the standardization of Welsh names in Wales and Gaelic names in the Gaelic-speaking areas in Scotland in cooperation with the Gaelic Names Liaison Committee. The Division also welcomed the participation of Jamaica, and an expert from Jamaica commented on standardization in that country.

E. Baltic Division

14. Working paper No. 30, presented by the Division, provided a comprehensive report on its activities, including divisional meetings, cooperation and its website, and also addressed various issues of standardization in Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania, including gazetteers, data files and exonyms.

F. Norden Division

15. Working paper No. 47 presented a comprehensive report of meetings of the Division since the twenty-second session of UNGEGN and noted the participation at meetings of representatives from Greenland (Denmark) for the first time. The working paper also reported on Nordic cooperation on Saami names, and on geographical names activities in Iceland and Norway.

G. China Division

16. Working paper No. 64, presented by the Division, noted the creation of a great number of new geographical names in China each year, and reported on a project to provide improved services on geographical names to the public, which included standardization of geographical names, provision of standard geographical name signs and toponymic information through websites and other electronic means.

H. Dutch- and German-speaking Division

17. Working Paper No. 68 reported on the activities within the Division with emphasis on the promotion of minority group and indigenous geographical names, joint meetings of divisions and working groups, a Europe-wide geographical names data infrastructure (EuroGeoNames), geographical names as cultural heritage, support for training and publications, gazetteers and toponymic data files. The Chairperson commented favourably on the format of the report, which was aligned with resolutions of the Eighth United Nations Conference on the Standardization of Geographical Names.

I. Eastern Europe, Northern and Central Asia Division

18. Working paper No. 80 provided information on activities relating to geographical names standardization in the member countries of the Division, including names authorities, national standardization, romanization, exonyms, toponymic databases and gazetteers.

J. East Central and South-East Europe Division

19. Working paper No. 85, presented by the Division, provided information on divisional meetings and on activities within member countries, including names authorities, national standardization, minority group and indigenous geographical names, toponymic databases and gazetteers, exonyms, romanization and country names. The more detailed reports of Hungary, Poland and Ukraine were attached to the working paper.

K. Asia South-East and Pacific South-West Division

20. Working paper No. 87 reported on meetings of the Division in New York in 2004 and in Brunei Darussalam in 2005, and on toponymic training courses held in Bathurst, Australia, in 2004 and in Malang, Indonesia, in 2005. Other activities of the Division included work on indigenous and minority group geographical names, the regional map and the divisional gazetteer.

L. Asia East Division (other than China)

21. Working paper No. 93 reported the activities of the Division. Experts within the Division expressed different views on the choice and use of the name of the

body of water separating the Korean peninsula and the Japanese archipelago. The Chairperson encouraged bilateral and multilateral efforts to find a solution acceptable to all.

M. Africa East Division

22. Working paper No. 96 of the Division reported on a toponymic training course held in the Sudan, the establishment of the National Council for Geographical Names in the Sudan, and on cooperation between the Sudan and neighbouring States in names standardization. The working paper drew attention to the difficulty of making contact with member countries of the Division. The Chairperson encouraged other divisions to assist the Africa East Division in carrying out its functions.

23. The report of the Sudan, working paper No. 74, drew attention to linguistic issues in that country. Reference was made to the National Committee of 1978, which had become a Council. A database of 70,000 names had been developed, a website was to be developed and a draft law had been prepared (see conference room paper No. 8 for the English-language version of the working paper).

N. Asia South-West Division (other than Arabic)

24. Working paper No. 59 of the Division reported on the work of the Expert Committee for Standardization of Geographical Names of the Islamic Republic of Iran, including activities on transcription, a database and website, historical names, terminology and exonyms. The working paper also gave information about the third national conference and exhibition on standardization of geographical names held at the National Cartographic Centre of Iran.

25. A report from Turkey, working paper No. 26, provided background information on measures to standardize geographical names in Turkey and the Board of Experts for Geographical Names of Turkey (BEGeoN-T). The expert also advised that the UNGEGN brochure had now been published in Turkish.

O. Latin America Division

26. Conference room paper No. 9 provided information on the work of the Division, including activities on national standardization, toponymic data files and guides, and exonyms in Chile, Spain and Mexico. Work had been carried out jointly by the Division to construct a website and to develop a document on the names of countries and their capitals.

P. Arabic Division

27. Conference room paper No. 10 presented by the Division reported on its meeting on geographical names held in Tripoli in 2004. Topics covered included romanization, an official gazetteer, geographical terminology, a database of Arabic geographical names and cooperation between Arab States. The paper also reported on activities in member countries, which included websites, software development and romanization.

Q. Romano-Hellenic Division

28. Conference room paper No. 11, presented by the Division, reported on efforts to encourage countries that had not done so to participate in activities of the Division and noted the request of Andorra to become a member. The paper also reported on a Division meeting held in Greece at which a number of issues were discussed, including toponymic data files and websites, exonyms and a multilingual glossary.

R. Other papers

29. The following papers were distributed, but not presented: working paper No. 4 (submitted by the Latin America Division — Mexico); working paper No. 86 (submitted by the Norden Division — Norway); working paper No. 88 (submitted by the Arabic Division — Algeria); working paper No. 89 (submitted by the Asia South-East, Pacific South-West Division — Thailand); working paper No. 97 (submitted by the French-speaking Division — Andorra); conference room paper No. 7 (submitted by the Asia East Division (other than China) — Republic of Korea); conference room paper No. 13 (submitted by the Arabic Division — Jordan); conference room paper No. 17 (submitted by the Asia South-East, Pacific South-West Division — Malaysia); conference room paper No. 19 (submitted by the Latin America Division — Argentina).

IX. Reports of the liaison officers, regional meetings and international organizations

Pan American Institute of Geography and History

30. The liaison officer presented an oral report indicating that the Institute considered applied toponymy to be a major focus of its work and that the training courses it ran was the practical application of that work. It also had a long-established involvement with the work of UNGEGN.

Council of Geographic Names Authorities

31. Working paper No. 18 provided details regarding the origins and purpose of the Council of Geographic Names Authorities (COGNA). It also reported on the two most recent meetings of COGNA, in Jacksonville, Florida, United States of America, in 2004 and Portland, Oregon, in 2005. Items of interest included defining the footprints, or geometry, of named physical features and the geocoding of addresses. More recently, the focus had been on the Geographic Names Information System (GNIS) and its future development and maintenance.

Scientific Committee on Antarctic Research

32. The liaison officer presented working paper No. 53. Antarctic place names appeared in 15 or more languages and five scripts. The composite gazetteer of geographical names for Antarctica, which had been published in 1998 and was available on the Internet, was updated quarterly and as of 1 January 2006 there were 35,551 name entries assigned to 17,887 different geographical features.

International Council of Onomastic Sciences

33. The liaison officer presented working paper No. 70, which referred to the International Congress of Onomastic Sciences (ICOS) held in Pisa, Italy, in 2005. Papers from the Congress were not available on the Internet as they were to be published. The working paper provided details about the members of the Board of ICOS and noted that the next Congress would be held in Toronto, Canada, in August 2008.

International Hydrographic Organization

34. The liaison officer presented working paper No. 91 on the activities of the International Hydrographic Organization (IHO) with respect to geographical names. The principal liaison activity concerned undersea feature-naming and the work of the Subcommittee on Undersea Feature Names (SCUFN). A recent result of the work of SCUFN was the inclusion of 34 new names in the GEBCO[1] gazetteer. Reference was also made to IHO publication S-23, *Limits of Oceans and Seas*, published in 1953, which was available on the IHO website. A fourth edition of the publication was in preparation.

Other meetings

35. The representative for the Eastern Europe, Northern and Central Asia Division presented conference room paper No. 5 on the Working Group on Geographical Names of the Inter-state Council for Geodesy, Cartography, Cadastre and Remote Control of the Earth established by the States members of the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS). The paper referred to meetings of the Working Group and its primary functions, including details of Bulletins it had published.

International Cartographic Association

36. A brief oral report was given by the liaison officer, referring to the twenty-second Conference of the Association, held in Spain in 2005, and the planned twenty-third Conference to be held in Moscow in August 2007. Two sessions on toponymy had been held at the twenty-second Conference and similar time would be allocated in Moscow. The Association had also developed a Web-based training course in toponymy (http://lazarus.elte.hu/cet/).

International Organization for Standardization

37. The liaison officer for Technical Committee 211 of the International Organization for Standardization (ISO) indicated that the next meeting would be held in Florida in May 2006. Details on liaison with ISO would be covered under the Working Group on Toponymic Data Files and Gazetteers.

International Geographical Union

38. A representative of the International Geographical Union (IGU) presented a report (conference room paper No. 16), which referred to the interest of IGU in geographical names and pointed out the significance of those names with respect to

[1] General Bathymetric Chart of the Oceans, a joint IHO-IOC (Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization) project.

research in geography and history. IGU was seeking to collaborate further with UNGEGN.

X. Activities relating to the Working Group on Training Courses in Toponymy

39. In working paper No. 41, the Convenor of the Working Group emphasized the value of toponymic training courses. Since 1982, at least one course had been held each year and a collection of manuals had been built up (see http://toponymycourses.geo.uu.nl). Since the twenty-second session of UNGEGN, international workshops or training courses in toponymy had been held in Panama City, Maputo, Bathurst, Australia, Malang, Indonesia, Santo Domingo and Vienna, as well as in China, Jordan and the Islamic Republic of Iran.

40. Information was provided on two national training courses:

(a) "*Introduction à la gestion toponymique*" offered at l'Université Laval, Québec, Canada;

(b) "Researching aboriginal placenames" offered by the Asia-Pacific Institute for Toponymy in Sydney, Australia, in conjunction with the New South Wales Aboriginal Languages Research and Resource Centre.

41. An expert from the China Division reported on a programme of training courses for geographical names and city planning in China. The objectives of the course were to improve city name planning, as more than 20,000 new urban names appeared in China every year. A course had been held in 2005, attended by about 400 people.

42. An expert from the Norden Division mentioned that a special issue of the ICOS journal, *Onoma*, devoted to the teaching of onomastics, would be published in 2006.

43. The liaison officer with the Pan American Institute for Geography and History (PAIGH) presented working paper No. 17, indicating that PAIGH had sponsored two training courses in applied toponymy, the sixteenth in 2004 in the Dominican Republic and the seventeenth in 2005 in Panama. The latest course introduced new concepts of data collection and database maintenance in support of an integrated, seamless national digital map series. The next PAIGH training course was scheduled for 2006.

44. Working paper No. 24 described a United Nations-supported toponymic training course for Southern Africa held in 2004 in Maputo, organized by the Chair of the Africa South Division. The objectives of the course were to understand the importance of standardized geographical names for various applications, the process of standardization, the necessity of names authorities, the collection and dissemination of names and the promotion of cooperation and training course opportunities between divisions of UNGEGN. The next toponymic training course for Southern Africa was planned for September 2006 in Maputo.

45. Oral summaries were presented of two other United Nations-supported training courses organized by:

(a) The Asia Pacific Institute for Toponymy and the New South Wales Geographical Names Board in Bathurst, Australia, in 2004. A CD-ROM had been produced with the teaching material of the course;

(b) The Indonesian National Coordinating Agency for Surveying and Mapping (BAKOSURTANAL) in Malang in 2005. Course materials had been made available to all experts in paper and CD-ROM versions.

46. Conference room paper No. 15, presented by the Dutch- and German-speaking Division, reported on a training course in toponymy held prior to the present UNGEGN session in Vienna. The course, organized by the Austrian Academy of Sciences and the Federal Office for Metrology and Surveying, was aimed especially at toponymists from Eastern Europe and Central Asia. A CD-ROM with the teaching material of the course had been produced.

47. Working paper No. 36 described a three-day workshop organized in Ottawa, Canada, by the Government of Nunavut and the Inuit Heritage Trust in 2005. The course was attended by some 20 researchers who discussed field collection and cartographic representation of locally used geographical names and who made three recommendations: creation of a technical working group, holding an Inuktitut terminology workshop, and creation of a Nunavut cultural map series on a 1:250,000 base.

48. The Convenor of the Working Group thanked the UNGEGN secretariat for having made available the Manual for standardization of geographical names, which had been distributed to all experts at the session.

49. While discussing working paper No. 39, experts from the French-speaking Division demonstrated the prototype of an Internet-based toponymy course for a French-speaking audience. The site would be hosted by the Commission de toponymie du Québec (Canada), and was accessible from the website of the French-speaking Division (http://www.divisionfrancophone.org/Formation/index.htm).

50. The Convenor referred to the work of the Commission on Education and Training (CET) of the International Cartographic Association (ICA) in creating a web-based cartography course. The initial stages of the toponymy module were demonstrated; the complete module was expected to be available in August 2007 (http://lazarus.elte.hu/cet/).

XI. Activities relating to the Working Group on Toponymic Data Files and Gazetteers

51. A representative of the East Central and South-East Europe Division presented working papers Nos. 10 and 11 detailing toponymic work in Poland. The first paper reported that part three of the national toponymic guide, addressing the technical treatment of place names in cartographic applications, had been published in 2005. The second paper reported on the first phase of the compilation of a national gazetteer focused on the collection, standardization and publication of hydronyms.

52. Working paper No. 13 of the Latin America Division reported on the development of the Brazilian Geographic Names Database. The project, begun in 1977, had lately been revitalized in recognition of the need to ensure consistent use

of geographical names. A Brazilian gazetteer was an anticipated outcome of the project.

53. A representative of the United States of America-Canada Division presented working paper No. 19 providing an update on the United States Geographic Names Information System. Recent enhancements included the availability of some geometric boundaries, new Internet services, and Web applications that allowed partnerships with all levels of Government and other certified authorities for data maintenance.

54. Working paper No. 23 of the East Central and South-East Europe Division presented information about the World Gazetteer in Ukrainian. The background, organization and content of the publication were presented.

55. An update on the Canadian Geographical Names Service (CGNS) was given by the representative of the United States of America-Canada Division in working paper No. 32. Improved name search functions and a user's guide had been added to the site. CGNS would eventually replace the Canadian Geographical Names database. Additional future enhancements were discussed.

56. A presentation by the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) expressed the necessity of a global toponymic database and gazetteer to address urgent humanitarian needs. The recent earthquake in Pakistan had provided the case study illustrating the need for such information. UNGEGN was urged to cooperate by making data available.

57. A summary of the information available at the Geographical Names of Canada website was described in working paper No. 33. The query by name was the most popular feature of the site. Future plans included the addition of historical information, educational materials, enhanced search capabilities and digital availability of *Canoma*, the magazine of the Geographical Names Board of Canada.

58. The Dutch- and German-speaking Division reported in working papers Nos. 49 and 50 on two activities relating to the EuroGeoNames (EGN) project. The former addressed the planned EGN infrastructure and services, which were to be a network of distributed databases. The latter related the details of a recently conducted geographical names survey/inventory.

59. Working paper No. 51 presented by a representative of the Dutch- and German-speaking Division, reported on a project involving the collection of names in the German coastal area taken primarily from products of the federal hydrographic authority.

60. The Asia East Division (other than China) reported in working paper No. 56 that an effort was under way in Japan to create a database of geographical names by administrative district. The intent was to capture the changes that had occurred in the past 100 years and to make the data available to allow the analysis and understanding of the geographical names history of Japan.

61. The National Geographical Names Database of the Islamic Republic of Iran was described by the Asia South-West Division (other than Arabic) in working paper No. 60. The expert outlined the background to the database's creation and reported on its current status. Some 30,000 names had thus far been entered and data entry was continuing. The structure of the database was also described.

62. Working paper No. 65, presented by the China Division, described developments by the Government of China to enhance the promulgation and promotion of geographical names by means of several innovative technological means including telephone hotlines, websites and public kiosks. In a related issue, working paper No. 66 discussed the standards and structure employed by the Government of China in the development of the software for its geographical names database.

63. In working paper No. 69, the Dutch- and German-speaking Division reported on the Digital City Map of Vienna project. The background, nature and utility of the product were described. It was reported that the digital map had proven to be the most important planning tool for the city.

64. The Dutch- and German-speaking Division, in working paper No. 71, presented a summary of the 2001 Gazetteer of Austria. The Gazetteer had been published following a national census. Information on the data presentation and availability of the product was provided.

65. Working paper No. 77, presented by the Latin America Division, provided details on the new Concise Gazetteer being compiled by the National Geographical Institute of Spain. Efforts were also under way to compile a model gazetteer for Spain. A comparison of the format and content of the two products was delineated. The Concise Gazetteer was the first step in the compilation of a national gazetteer.

66. The East Central and South-East Europe Division presented working paper No. 84 on the creation of GEONAMES, the digital geographical names database for the Czech Republic. The database had been fully populated in 2005 and could be ordered online.

67. Working paper No. 90, presented by the Asia South-East and Pacific South-West Division, described the draft map showing toponyms (endonyms) for the entire area covered by the Division. The product was to be available, when complete, in PDF and ESRI ArcReader formats. The project was commended as an example of divisional cooperation.

68. The Africa South Division, in working paper No. 100, presented a summary of the name standardization activities in South Africa since 2000. Name change statistics were categorized by language and province. A table of town name changes of general interest was included.

69. Conference room paper No. 1 from the Asia East Division (other than China) provided a status report on the geographical name standardization efforts in the Republic of Korea. Standardization guidelines had been published and 160,000 names had been processed. However, the standardization process was not yet considered final.

70. The Eastern Europe, Northern and Central Asia Division presented conference room paper No. 3 to inform the session of the Russian Federation database of official name changes; the federal mandate for this work was explained. An information bulletin had been published in 2005 which compiled the name changes that had occurred from 1998 to 2005 and it was anticipated that an updated bulletin would be issued every six months.

71. Conference room paper No. 4, also by the Eastern Europe, Northern and Central Asia Division, provided an update on the State Catalogue of Geographical

Names in the Russian Federation. The categories of data presented were enumerated and samples of the catalogue were included. The project's first phase of entering names, based on small-scale cartographic products from the past card index was expected to be completed next year. Preliminary work on the second phase had begun.

72. The Arabic Division, in conference room paper No. 12, presented an overview of the gazetteer of geographical names for Lebanon, including the application of romanization rules. The presentation detailed the mapping and geographic history of Lebanon and concluded with information on the newly available gazetteer and digital map of the country, which evidenced the application of romanization rules to be endorsed by the League of Arab States.

73. Conference room paper No. 14, submitted by the Arabic Division, described the Geographic Names Index of Jordan. The Index had been completed in 2004 and contained over 10,000 names from the 1:25,000 and 1:50,000 topographic maps of the country and was available on CD-ROM.

74. The Convenor of the Working Group presented the Working Group's report, working paper No. 99, to conclude the agenda item. The Group had not met during the previous two years and no progress had been made on the workplan as set forth at the Eighth Conference in 2002. The Convenor stressed that the Working Group could not remain inactive, and highlighted a few items on which action was needed. They included activation of liaison relationships with the Unicode Consortium, with ISO Technical Committee 211 and with the Open Geospatial Consortium. Additional efforts should pursue collaboration with the NATO Interservice Geographic Working Group and possible compilation of a handbook on toponymic databases for use by UNGEGN.

XII. Activities relating to the Working Group on Toponymic Terminology

75. The Convenor of the Working Group presented its report, working paper No. 7, which provided a brief history of the Working Group and of the Glossary of terms for the standardization of geographical names prepared by the Working Group and published by the UNGEGN secretariat in 2002. The paper listed the terms which should now come under consideration by the Working Group.

76. The experts discussed some of the definitions of terms proposed in working paper No. 7, for example, oronym, toponymisation, ethnonym, limnonym and lacustrine name. With a view to further refinement and finalization of the definitions, the experts referred these and other terms included in the report to the Working Group for informal discussions.

77. In the absence of an expert from the Africa Central Division, the Convenor remarked that working paper No. 43 dealt with individual toponyms in Gabon and did not come under the agenda item under discussion.

78. The Convenor presented working paper No. 5, which showed how definitions of the terms exonym, endonym, standardized endonym and traditional name had evolved over time. There was a discussion concerning the currently accepted definitions of those terms and the new definitions proposed by the Working Group

on Exonyms. Discussion focused on the principle of exclusivity of the terms, on the interpretation of "official" and "well-established" language and on the general applicability of the definitions. It was recommended that members of the two Working Groups (Terminology and Exonyms) should meet for further discussion on the definition of those terms.

XIII. Activities relating to the Working Group on Romanization Systems

79. The Convenor of the Working Group emphasized that its main task was to consider romanization systems proposed by national authorities and intended for adoption as United Nations systems. The prerequisites for the adoption of such systems were outlined.

80. In working paper No. 98, the Convenor detailed the composition of the Working Group, reported on activities since 2004 and provided updated information regarding a number of romanization systems. Details of all the systems were on the Working Group's website: http://www.eki.ee/wgrs.

81. The Asia South-West Division (other than Arabic) presented working paper No. 62 on transcription procedures for Iranian toponyms. Three principal procedures had been studied by the Transcription Working Group of the Specialist Committee for the Romanization and Standardization of Geographical Names of the Islamic Republic of Iran, which were detailed in the paper. Some technical details were clarified through discussion.

82. The romanization of Korean was examined in working paper No. 95, presented by the East Asia Division (other than China). The paper highlighted the differences between the McCune-Reischauer system of romanization and the system recently adopted by the Republic of Korea. The paper also noted that discussions on a common approach to the Korean language had been taking place between the Democratic People's Republic of Korea and the Republic of Korea.

83. The Eastern Europe, Northern and Central Asia Division reported in conference room paper No. 6 that the system adopted by the United Nations for the romanization of Russian Cyrillic, GOST-83, continued to be used for geographical names in the Russian Federation. A number of publications illustrating its application were listed in the paper. The expert from the Division explained that other romanization standards existed which were used in texts and for personal names.

84. Romanization issues affected many elements of the work of the Group of Experts and the Convenor stressed the importance of continued collaboration between those national authorities dealing with romanization and the Working Group.

XIV. Activities relating to the Working Group on Country Names

85. The Convenor of the Working Group presented working paper No. 16 and summarized the progress made by the Working Group since the last session of the Group of Experts. The Working Group had met in November 2005 in Lefkada,

Greece, to review the latest draft revision of the List of Country Names (E/CONF.94/CRP.11) of the Eighth Conference. Several changes in the format and content of the document had been proposed, including in the nature of a section entitled "Names used by a national authority", which provided references to country names used within Member States that differed from those included in United Nations Terminology Bulletin No. 347.

86. Working paper No. 40 comprised the latest version of the draft List of Country Names. The Convenor summarized the changes in format, and noted that more than 80 country entries had been updated. It was noted that information contained in the "National Official" section of each entry had been gathered by the Working Group through a survey of national authorities in order to establish national official country names currently in use. The Convenor urged experts to review the draft list and to provide corrections to the Working Group. He stressed that information contained in the "UN Official" section of each entry was under the authority of the Terminology and Reference Section of the United Nations Translation and Editorial Division. Requests for change of official United Nations names must be submitted there.

87. Working paper No. 8 from the East Central and South-East Europe Division described the Polish publication *Nazwy państw* (*Country Names*), issued in 2006 and providing in Polish a list of the names of independent countries of the world.

88. Working paper No. 58 from the Asia South-West Division (other than Arabic) described activities undertaken by the Committee for Standardization of Geographical Names of the Islamic Republic of Iran to compile a list of country names based on the list in the United Nations Terminology Bulletin. The list was approved by the Committee in March 2005, and would be published and posted on the Committee's website.

89. Working paper No. 79, presented by the Latin America Division, made reference to the list of names of countries of the world used by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Spain, and highlighted a list of differences between the country names used in Spain and those used by the United Nations.

90. Working paper No. 81 from the French-speaking Division outlined the work accomplished in 2005 to harmonize the country names used by various government organizations in France.

91. The Convenor noted that nationally compiled lists of country names were useful to the activity of the Working Group. He again stressed the need to review the draft List of Country Names and to submit corrections to the Working Group or the Terminology and Reference Section, as appropriate.

XV. Activities relating to the Working Group on Publicity and Funding

92. The Convenor of the Working Group presented the working paper No. 27, the report of the Working Group. He outlined the revised mandate of the Working Group and noted that three meetings had taken place since the twenty-second session.

93. The Convenor reported on activities relating to publicity, including:

(a) A toponymy session, which had attracted extensive media coverage, at the thirtieth International Geographical Congress, held in Glasgow, Scotland in 2004;

(b) Various ways in which experts had promoted geographical names through publications, public lectures and conference papers;

(c) Turkish- and German-language versions of the UNGEGN publicity brochure Consistent Use of Place Names. The procedure for publishing the brochure in other languages was summarized.

94. The Convenor encouraged experts to develop their own geographical names websites and to create links with the UNGEGN website. In future, a paper would be produced outlining the steps involved in creating a geographical names website.

95. The Convenor reported that a new promotional leaflet aimed at GIS and mapping organizations in developing countries and a press kit for use by experts and the media were being prepared for publication in 2006 or 2007.

96. The Convenor suggested that funding for training courses and publications scheduled for 2008/09 and requiring funding from the United Nations might require the adoption of a resolution by the Ninth United Nations Conference, as done at the Eighth Conference in 2002.

97. In working paper No. 28, the Convenor provided guidelines to assist experts in identifying alternative sources of funding. He noted that collaborative partnerships with other organizations were recommended, and were illustrated by some of the working papers presented at the present Session. Discussion ensued regarding the location of future sessions and conferences, and on funding for participants in the context of affording greater accessibility to those from developing countries.

98. In working paper No. 52, presented by the Dutch- and German-speaking Division, further information was provided on the German-language version of the UNGEGN brochure, which was now downloadable from the Internet.

99. A Swedish publication on the work of UNGEGN was presented in working paper No. 1. It described, in Swedish, various aspects of the Group's activities since its inception, with an English summary of each chapter. Copies of the publication were distributed at the session.

100. Conference room paper No. 18, presented by the Africa South Division, took the form of a short video produced to provide the public with a better understanding of the work of standardizing geographical names in South Africa and of the role of the South African Geographical Names Council. Copies of the video were made available to participants at the session.

XVI. Activities relating to the Working Group on Evaluation and Implementation

101. The Convenor of the Working Group introduced its activities, briefly outlining its aims and objectives, before presenting the report of the Working Group, working paper No. 94. He reported on the results of the last meeting, which had taken place

in Seoul in November 2005, a joint meeting with the Working Group on Publicity and Funding.

102. Working paper No. 101, presented by the Africa South Division, identified challenges facing the recently established Provincial Geographical Names Committees (PGNCs) in South Africa. It stressed financial and organizational capacity-building issues. The expert explained that the PGNCs did not have a decision-making mandate, but made recommendations to the South African National Names Council.

XVII. Activities relating to the Working Group on Exonyms

103. The Convenor of the Working Group summarized its terms of reference and presented working paper No. 67, which outlined past and planned activities of the Group. The fourth meeting of the Working Group had been held in Ljubljana in 2005. A major outcome was a resolution to accept revised definitions of the terms exonym and endonym and to present those definitions to the present session and to the Working Group on Terminology. The Convenor noted that those definitions had now been accepted, at a joint meeting of the two Working Groups. Publication of a book on exonyms, consisting of papers presented at previous meetings of the Working Group, was expected soon.

104. An expert from the East Central and South-East Europe Division presented working paper No. 9, which outlined the work of the Commission for Standardization of Geographical Names outside Poland in standardizing Polish exonyms. The expert noted in particular that the Commission had needed to include in its list toponyms that did not fall within the existing standard definition of exonym (and which had led the Working Group to recommend revised definitions of both exonym and endonym).

105. An expert from the French-speaking Division presented working paper No. 38, summarizing work on "La base de données des exonymes de la langue française" (Database of French-language exonyms). This database of exonyms was primarily intended for Francophone users requiring reliable information on geographical names. The expert confirmed that the database had previously been referred to as "Bougainville".

106. An expert from the Asia South-West Division (other than Arabic) summarized working paper No. 61, which outlined the history of the name Persian Gulf. The Convenor recognized the careful historical content of the paper and noted that countries could not be prohibited from using or creating exonyms.

107. An expert from the Dutch- and German-speaking Division presented working paper No. 73, which summarized recent research on the difficulty experienced by editors in choosing between exonyms and endonyms for use in their publications. The research presented a decision-support system for editors in such circumstances, based on clearly defined criteria.

108. An expert from the East Central and South-East Europe Division outlined the rationale for, and the structure of, the List of Czech Exonyms. The List, which was described, including examples, in working paper No. 83, was intended for publication in mid-2006.

XVIII. Activities relating to the Working Group on Pronunciation

109. Working paper No. 92, presented by the Convenor of the Working Group, reported on a meeting of the Working Group held during the twenty-second session of UNGEGN in New York in 2004. The Convenor reported that the Working Group had held a meeting during the current session and had agreed to hold a further meeting in the first half of 2007. He stated that the Working Group's workplan would focus on such issues as national pronunciation tables of geographical names and the provision of the pronunciation element for the planned UNGEGN Web-accessible toponymic database (the only pronunciation guide supplied to date had been for Hebrew).

110. Working paper No. 6, presented by the East Mediterranean Division (other than Arabic), outlined the need for national pronunciation guides and presented recommendations for the preparation of such guides for English speakers. During the discussion, the issue of the written representation of pronunciation was raised, in particular the use of the International Phonetic Alphabet (IPA). Experts accepted the need for pronunciation guides for lists of individual names and recognized the advantages of Web-accessible audio pronunciation guides for geographical names.

111. Working paper No. 37, presented by the United States of America-Canada Division, reported on three websites in Canada that included an audio pronunciation guide for some indigenous geographical names, and noted the cultural value of those and similar sites.

XIX. Activities relating to the Working Group on the Promotion of Indigenous and Minority Group Names

112. Working paper No. 82, presented by the United States of America-Canada Division, reported on the collection and dissemination of indigenous names in the United States of America. The paper referred to the United States policy of univocity and variant names and on the ongoing work with indigenous communities, such as the Coeur d'Alene project. Two projects had been undertaken and many names made official, but as many as 300 more projects might be required. Appropriate generic terms were usually added to indigenous names for clarity of maps and other references.

113. Working paper No. 34, presented by the French-speaking Division, reported on the work done in Québec to record, preserve and disseminate indigenous names. The paper outlined what had been done in Québec and the ongoing programmes. Six publications on indigenous names had been published by the Commission de toponymie du Québec.

114. An expert from the Dutch- and German-speaking Division presented working paper No. 42, the report of Geonames 2005, the International Conference on Indigenous Names/Minority Names and Multilingual Areas, held in Ljouwert/Leeuwarden, the Netherlands, in April 2005. The proceedings of the Conference and the conference papers had now been published.

115. Working paper No. 44, presented by the Norden Division, was a report on the supplementary field collection of Saami names in Finland.

116. Working paper No. 54, presented by the Dutch- and German-speaking Division provided a status report on the promotion of minority and indigenous geographical names in Germany. It recorded that there were four official minority languages in Germany, although geographical names were used in only two of them — Sorbian and Frisian.

117. Working paper No. 63, presented by the China Division, reported on the protection of the geographical names culture in China. China had a long and rich history, preserved in the culture of its geographical names, and had a project to record, preserve and promote those names through television documentaries, painting and calligraphy. China was also working to record and preserve the names of alleys and byways in Beijing.

118. Working paper No. 72, presented by the Dutch- and German-speaking Division, provided information on measures taken to record and preserve endonymic minority names of all categories in the Province of Burgenland, Austria.

119. Working paper No. 102, presented by the Convenor of the Working Group, described the Working Group's plans, including the task of recording and reporting on work undertaken in the promotion of indigenous and minority group names by geographical names authorities. A template for input by names authorities had been prepared, and would be distributed through the UNGEGN secretariat. Contributions from authorities were invited for inclusion in the report to be prepared for the Ninth Conference.

XX. Toponymic guidelines for map editors and other editors

120. The Chairperson, in introducing the agenda item, referred to the foundational work of Josef Breu of Austria, former UNGEGN Chair, in the late 1970s, and encouraged experts to examine the exhibition of his life and work that had been set up outside the conference room.

121. Working paper No. 46, presented by the Norden Division, reported on the updating of the toponymic guidelines of Finland. This was the fourth revised edition of the guidelines, which were available through a link on the UNGEGN website.

122. Working paper No. 57, presented by the Asia East Division (other than China), reported on the current version of the toponymic guidelines for Japan, which replaced the 1994 guidelines. They would be available on the Internet in the near future.

123. A representative from the Dutch- and German-speaking Division presented working paper No. 76, which was a major revision of the Austrian toponymic guidelines, available online at www.oeaw.ac.at/dinamlex/AKO/AKO_Toponymic_Guidelines.html.

124. In responding to requests of experts, the Chairperson said that website addresses that appeared in documents of the session could be reproduced in a separate document after the session and made available by the secretariat on the UNGEGN website.

125. The Latin America Division presented working paper No. 78, toponymic guidelines for Spain. These new guidelines had been published and would also be available on the Internet, in Spanish only.

126. The current coordinator of toponymic guidelines from the Dutch- and German-speaking Division, Isolde Hausner, emphasized the importance of producing full or partial guidelines for a country. She referred experts to chapter IX of Part two of the new Manual for the national standardization of geographical names for both details of the content of the guidelines and a table of those produced since 1975.

XXI. Other toponymic issues

127. Working paper No. 12, presented by the Latin America Division, reported on the standardization of names in Mexico. Mexico had now developed technical standards for the standardization and field collection of geographical names, including indigenous names.

128. Working paper No. 22, presented by the representative of Mongolia, provided background information on aspects of Mongolian geographical names and the need for their preservation. The current romanization system being used for Mongolian was that of the United Kingdom Permanent Committee on Geographical Names; United States Board on Geographic Names; it would take time for Mongolia to develop its own system, and continued cooperation with the Working Group on Romanization Systems was recommended.

129. Working paper No. 31, presented by the United States of America-Canada Division, reported on possible research topics to be undertaken by the Geographical Names Board of Canada's Advisory Committee on Nomenclature, Policy and Research. The paper listed a number of topics of importance to Canada. Comments and other suggestions from international experts were requested by 15 April 2006.

130. Working paper No. 48, submitted by the Dutch- and German-speaking Division, addressed the subdivision of Europe into large regions based on cultural criteria. It described the process and noted that it was being reviewed for publication.

131. The Dutch- and German-speaking Division presented working paper No. 75, which provided details of the transposition of the Austrian mapping system into the Universal Transverse Mercator (UTM) system map-sheets on the scales of 1:50,000 and 1:200,000.

Task team on Africa: panel discussion

132. The Vice-Chairperson of UNGEGN, Brahim Atoui, remarked in his opening statement as moderator that the purpose of the discussion was to explore ways to improve the participation of African countries in geographical names standardization and the activities of UNGEGN. The panel followed up the initiative of the task team created at the twenty-second session to help African countries. He noted that, apart from countries in northern and southern Africa, few African countries had participated in the work of UNGEGN and that those countries were most in need of standardizing geographical names.

133. The Secretary-General of the African Organization of Cartography and Remote Sensing (AOCRS) outlined the activities of that body, reporting that it had been established in 1988, had a current membership of 24 countries throughout Africa and was affiliated with the African Union. AOCRS, the organization in charge of coordinating cartographic and remote-sensing activities in Africa, gave

priority to geographical names activities and helped in the organization of training courses in toponymy.

134. Representatives from the Arabic Division, the Africa East Division, the Africa South Division, Africa West Division and the French-speaking Division contributed to the discussion, stressing the need to raise awareness of the importance of national standardization of geographical names in poorer countries in Africa and the need for setting up national committees to undertake this work. They noted that training was a fundamental requirement and that there was a need for both financial assistance and cooperation between divisions in order to achieve this. The Secretary-General of ICA said that in response to the decline in capacity-building in cartography, ICA had established an initiative, "Africa for Africa", to help African countries.

135. In conclusion, the Vice-Chairperson remarked that there was a need for AOCRS and ICA to work together in the interest of standardizing geographical names in Africa, and for AOCRS in particular to raise awareness of the necessity of national structures to be established to that end. He thanked the French-speaking Division for its offer to help with fellowships for trainees.

Presentation of UNGEGN database by the UNGEGN secretariat

136. The UNGEGN secretariat gave a presentation on the proposed development of a database of city and country names. He outlined the background, data modelling and building process of the database, and also referred to future prospects. The proposed steps included capturing country names, names of major cities with populations of over 100,000, United Nations Geographical Information Working Group (UNGIWG) international boundaries, and possibly an audio file for endonyms. A prototype was currently being prepared.

Presentation by the Norden Division

137. Johnny Andersen, an expert from the Division, made a presentation on the digital environment for geographical names. The presentation referred to the digital map system of the past and the structured digital dataset of the future, and provided an example of a database model.

Presentation by Olaf Østensen, Chairman, ISO Technical Committee 211.

138. Olaf Østensen gave a presentation on the work of ISO Technical Committee 211 and the issues relating to geographical names. He spoke of the role and experience of ISO and the participation of UNGEGN in the development of the Committee's standards. He concluded by referring to ISO standard 19112 and the toponymic framework, the composite model and the toponymic service on the Web.

XXII. Implementation of resolutions and the aims and functions of the Group of Experts

139. The Chairperson referred experts to documents GEGN/23/8, the resolutions adopted at the Eighth United Nations Conference on the Standardization of Geographical Names, and GEGN/23/9, the list of resolutions adopted at the Eighth Conference. These resolutions are available on the UNGEGN website. She noted

that UNGEGN had to report to the Ninth Conference on the implementation of the resolutions.

140. Working paper No. 29, presented by the Norden Division, referred to resolution 2 of the Eighth Conference regarding commemorative naming. It reported on a questionnaire prepared by an expert from Sweden which had been circulated to UNGEGN members. Twenty-two replies had been received representing diverging opinions and problems encountered with commemorative naming.

141. Working paper No. 35, presented by the United States of America-Canada Division, reported on commemorative naming guidelines recently adopted in Canada. The guidelines were a useful model for other authorities.

142. Working paper No. 45, on commemorative naming practices in Helsinki, was presented by the Norden Division. It reported on commemorating individuals, companies and communities in Helsinki, and included the principles adopted by the Place Names Committee of the City of Helsinki.

143. The Norden Division presented working paper No. 14, a report on geographical names in various languages. The paper reported on endonyms and exonyms and issues regarding diacritics and transcription, and gave some examples from a Norwegian encyclopaedia.

144. An expert from the Norden Division, Botolv Helleland, had been asked by the Chairperson to provide an overview of the work reported concerning resolution VIII/9 referring to cultural aspects of naming. He cited information from the reports of several divisions. An expert from the Latin America Division added further comments on the links to cultural heritage in Argentina.

XXIII. Preparation for the Ninth United Nations Conference on the Standardization of Geographical Names

145. The provisional agenda for the Ninth United Nations Conference on the Standardization of Geographical Names (GEGN/23/6) was circulated for information purposes. The Conference has planned to be held in New York from 21 to 30 August 2007. Associated displays and technical meetings would be considered.

146. In introducing working paper No 55, the Chairperson mentioned some of the changes that had been introduced at the present UNGEGN session (for instance, in relation to special presentations and demonstrations, documents posted on the UNGEGN website, etc.). She noted the need to be proactive now if UNGEGN was to recommend changes in the modus operandi of future conferences. Working paper No. 55 opened the discussion on such aspects as the length, emphasis and handling of country reports, divisional meetings, resolutions, etc., and provided a feedback mechanism for the recommendations of experts.

XXIV. Provisional agenda for the twenty-fourth session of the United Nations Group of Experts on Geographical Names

147. The provisional agenda for the twenty-fourth session of UNGEGN (annex) was circulated and accepted by experts. The meeting was planned for 20 and 31 August 2007, in conjunction with the Ninth Conference.

XXV. Adoption of the report

148. The draft report of the session as amended during its reading was adopted and would be published as GEGN/23 and GEGN/23/INF.4.

XXVI. Expression of thanks

149. Thanks were expressed to the Chairperson, the Vice-Chairpersons, the Rapporteurs, the Division Chairs and the Working Group Convenors and Rapporteurs, the secretariat and conference services staff for their contribution to the session.

Annex

Provisional agenda for the twenty-fourth session of the United Nations Group of Experts on Geographical Names

1. Opening of the session.
2. Adoption of the agenda.
3. Report of the working groups.
4. Reports of liaison officers.
5. Organizational matters concerning the Ninth United Nations Conference on the Standardization of Geographical Names.
6. Review of the statute of the United Nations Group of Experts on Geographical Names.
7. Election of officers.
8. Planning for implementation of the recommendations of the Ninth Conference.
9. Working groups for future requirements.
10. Provisional agenda for the twenty-fifth session.
11. Other business.